

## Christine Mirzayan Science and Technology Policy Graduate Fellows 1997 Biographical Sketches



**Alka Agrawal** (1997, IOM/PHPHP) received her BS in chemical engineering from the University of Michigan and a PhD in pharmacology from Yale University, working on the biochemistry of site-specific recombination in the immune system. She spent several years working as a scientist at a research institute in France and at a pharmaceutical company in Britain. She has also been a science writer and editor and spent a summer as a AAAS Mass Media Fellow during graduate school. She is currently working as a scientist at a biotechnology company in the Boston area.



**Zachary Alinder** (1997, DELS/BRWM) is a partner at the law firm, Bingham McCutchen LLP. He has successfully litigated a broad range of matters, including enforcement and defense of copyright and trade secret claims, unfair competition claims, nationwide consumer class action defense, multiparty contract disputes, environmental counseling, government and internal investigations, and complex fraud actions. In 2006, he served for three months as an assistant district attorney for the City and County of San Francisco as part of Bingham McCutchen's loaner DA program. In November of 2010, he was part of the trial team representing software-company, Oracle, in a lawsuit against its biggest competitor, SAP, resulting in a jury award in favor of Oracle that was the largest jury verdict of 2010 and the largest copyright verdict of all time. (Updated 2/2011)

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**Milton "Van" Blackwood, Jr.** (1997, DEPS/CETS) is has been working on a PhD in chemistry at Princeton University while earning a certificate in science, technology, and public policy. His bachelor's degree is in chemistry is from the University of North Carolina. He is interested in developing a more scientifically-literate public and improving the technology transfer between developed and developing country in order to help avert possible health and environmental disasters in the developing world. His career goal is to work in science and technology policy. Van spent his Mirzayan Fellowship working for the Commission on Engineering and Technical Systems.



**Michele D. Blum** (1997, DBASSE/CSMEE) received her bachelor's degree in biology in 1986 from Lafayette College in Easton, Pa. where she also minored in government and law. She attended Cornell University Graduate School of Medical Sciences in New York City where she received a PhD in molecular biology in 1994. She has been serving as a postdoctoral fellow in the Laboratory of Human Behavior and Metabolism at The Rockefeller University, where she investigates the molecular genetic basis for obesity and Type II diabetes. Michele spent her Mirzayan Fellowship working at the Center for Science, Mathematics and Engineering Education in the Division of K-12 Science Education on a new web site for scientists interested in becoming involved in K-12 science education, and on an addendum to the National Science Education Standards on scientific inquiry.



**Johannes "Jannie" Botes** (1997, NAS/ONPI) is an Associate Professor in the College of Public Affairs at the University of Baltimore and till recently directed the Master's Program in Negotiation and Conflict Management (2006-2010). He also serves as an adjunct professor at George Mason's Institute for Conflict Analysis and Resolution (ICAR) and at Johns Hopkins University's School of Advanced International Studies (SAIS). His main areas of academic research and writing are conflict transformation, formal and informal third party intervention, as well as communication and conflict (focusing on the role of the media in reporting on social conflict and conflict resolution). Before joining UB in 1999 he was a visiting professor at Bryn Mawr College (1997-1998) and at ICAR (1998-1999) from where he holds a Ph.D. His Master's degree in Communication (Journalism and Public Affairs) was obtained from The American University in

Washington, D.C. Dr. Botes was born in Worcester, South Africa. After completing B. Drama and Honors degrees at the University of Stellenbosch he had a 12-year career as a radio and television journalist in South Africa where he received various awards for his work. (Updated 2/2011)

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**Ann Keller** (1997, NAE/NAEPO) has been working towards a PhD in political science at the University of California, Berkeley. She has a master's degree in political science from Berkeley as well as a mathematics and political science degree from Indiana University. She is particularly interested in health policy and environmental conservation. Following her Mirzayan Fellowship she had been planning to begin field work on her dissertation in Washington. Her long-term career goals are to conduct research and teach with a specific focus on the use of science in public decision-making and the administration of environmental and health policy. Anne spent her Fellowship working for the National Academy of Engineering.



**Regis Krah** (1997, DELS/CLS) is a post-doctoral fellow at the National Institutes of Health. He received his PhD in microbiology and molecular biology from the Medical College of Virginia. He holds a bachelor's degree in chemistry from Virginia Wesleyan College. He is interested in gaining a better understanding of the interaction between government and science so that he can step back from bench research and move into a position that combines his training as a scientist with his desire to serve the public. Regis spent his Mirzayan Fellowship working for the Commission on Life Sciences.



**Colby Mills** (1997, NAS/OPUS/) has been working towards his PhD at George Mason University, where he also received his master's degree. He also has his bachelor's degree in psychology and neuroscience from Duke University. He is specializing in clinical psychology and is particularly interested in policy which promotes the efficient delivery of effective mental health interventions as well as clear communication of science to the public. After completing his doctorate, he plans to work in family-based treatment of children. Colby spent his fellowship working with at the Office of Public Understanding of Science, under director Donna Gerardi.



**Concepcion Nierras** (1997, PGA/OSEP) is director of Research, Scientific Affairs, for the Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation (JDRF). She serves as liaison to JDRF's partner funding organizations, and has helped develop, implement, and evaluate partnerships with international funding agencies, including the Wellcome Trust, the European Association for the Study of Diabetes (EASD), the Canadian Federal Development Agency, and the National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC) of Australia. Marie serves as program officer for genetics consortia co-supported by the US National Institutes of Health. She works with other JDRF program scientists on initiatives such as common mechanisms in autoimmune diseases, stem cell research, and initiatives in diabetic nephropathy. Marie received her PhD in genetics from the University of Wisconsin, Madison, and has also worked

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at Oxford University and at Albert Einstein College of Medicine. She has published articles in the genetics of Type 1 diabetes, in stem cell research as it applies to diabetes, and in research policy. She was part of the first class of Mirzayan fellows, in summer 1997. (Updated 10/2011)



**Bryan Olthof** (1997, NAS/OCGA) is a master's candidate in chemical engineering at the University of California Berkeley. His BS, also in chemical engineering, is from Cornell University. He is interested in combining his engineering background with his interest in public policy. Bryan spent his fellowship working for Jim Jensen in the Office of Congressional and Government Affairs (OCGA), doing legislative history research as well as coordinating Congressional briefings with Mr. Jensen. His interests are in international relations and international development and the science/technology policy issues involved in both. His career goal is to bring an engineering perspective to government agencies which regulate the environment, develop energy strategies, or oversee scientific research. (Updated 9/2009)



**Pratima Raghunathian** (1997, NAS/OIA) has a PhD in biochemistry from the University of California, San Francisco and a bachelor's degree in biochemistry from Yale. After completing her Mirzayan Fellowship, she earned an MPH in epidemiology from the School of Public Health at the University of California, Berkeley. She is a cofounder and the current executive director of Sustainable Sciences Institute, a nonprofit organization that strengthens scientific capacity in developing countries. Pratima spent her fellowship working for the Office of International Affairs.



**Marty Riche** (1997, DELS/BANR) has been getting his PhD in fish nutrition at Michigan State University. He holds a bachelor's degree in fisheries biology from Humboldt State University and a master's degree in aquatic animal nutrition from Purdue. He is particularly interested in environmental issues surrounding aquaculture, ethics in science, the effects of trade treaties, human and animal nutrition policies, and the regulatory atmosphere related to chemical and drug use in aquaculture and aquatic species. He has worked with the Army Corps of Engineers, the U.S. Forest Service, and as a volunteer with the Peace Corps. He is now interested in pursuing a career in research and teaching. Marty spent his Mirzayan Fellowship working closely with the Board on Agriculture, later known as the Board on Agriculture and National Resources.



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**Ann Roberts** (1997, DBASSE/BCYF) has been earning her PhD in quantitative community psychology at New York University. Her bachelor's degree in psychology and philosophy is from Swarthmore College. Prior to entering New York University, she managed an alternative-to detention and community projects for felony defendants program for Vera Institute of Justice and spent two years living and working in Kenya and the Dominican Republic. Her primary interest are in the effects of poverty and cultural differences on human development, particularly the relationship between adolescent antisocial behavior and neighborhood and family factors. Her career goal is to research human behavior in natural, applied settings and to design, provide, and evaluate direct community-based prevention services. Ann spent her Mirzayan Fellowship working closely with Rosemary Chalk, Deputy Director, at the Board on Children, Youth, and Families in the Commission (later, Division) on Behavioral and Social Sciences and Education.



**Elizabeth Scharl** (1997, PGA/PGA EO) is a post-doctoral fellow at Yale University focusing on isolating proteins. Her PhD, also from Yale, is in molecular biophysics and biochemistry and her bachelor's degree in biochemistry is from the University of Illinois. She is interested in a career involved in advising government on policy decisions and participating in the creation of science and technology policy. Liz spent her fellowship working for the Policy Division (later to be known as the Policy and Global Affairs division).



**Jamey Wetmore** (1997, TRB/TRB Studies) was a Mirzayan Fellow during the first summer of the program in 1997. He is now an Assistant Professor at the Consortium for Science, Policy & Outcomes and the School of Human Evolution & Social Change at Arizona State University. He received his doctorate in Science & Technology Studies from Cornell University in 2003 and then completed two years of postdoctoral research in technology and ethics with Deborah Johnson at the University of Virginia. His research examines the relationship between technology and society in a variety of different ways. He has studied the history and politics of transportation, the Amish use of technology; nanotechnology and religion, and engineering ethics and engages with scientists and engineers to help them consider the societal implications and potential applications of their work. He works with the Center for Nanotechnology in Society and the Consortium for Science, Policy & Outcomes to develop new ways to be reflexive about technology and scientific research in order to improve our understanding of their effects and guide innovations toward socially desirable outcomes. Jamey is currently finishing a book that examines the social and political history of automotive restraints in the United States and explores how responsibilities for various aspects of safety were distributed, reconceived, and redistributed over the past forty years. He is co-author, with Deborah Johnson, of *Technology & Society: Building our Sociotechnical Future* (MIT Press, 2008), co-editor with Erik Fisher and Cynthia Selin of *The Yearbook of Nanotechnology in Society, Vol 1: Presenting Futures* (Springer 2008) and co-editor with Susan Cozzens of *The Yearbook of Nanotechnology in Society, Vol. 2: Nanotechnology and The Challenges of Equity, Equality, and Development* (Springer 2010). (Updated 10/2011)